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**IN THE CLAIMS**

1. (currently amended) A data communication apparatus comprising:

a transmission side; and

a reception side that includes:

a spread spectrum processing part that performs a spread spectrum process on an input signal;

an analog-to-digital conversion part ~~that performs an analog-to-digital conversion process on a signal that has undergone said spread spectrum process~~ that digitally converts the spread spectrum processed signal by sampling the spread spectrum processed signal at a sampling timing in sync with an oscillation timing of the spread spectrum processed signal; and

an inverse spread spectrum processing part that performs an inverse spread spectrum process of said spread spectrum process on ~~a signal that has undergone said analog-to-digital conversion process~~ the digitally converted signal.

2. (currently amended) The data ~~transmission~~ communication apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said spread spectrum process is performed using a predetermined PN sequence.

3. (currently amended) The data ~~transmission~~ communication apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein a PN sequence number of said PN sequence is set to a value that is adequate for substantial improvement in the precision of said analog-to-digital conversion process so that ~~transmission~~ data contained in the input signal can be detected with predetermined precision.

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4. (currently amended) The data ~~transmission~~communication apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

a gain controlling part that performs a signal gain controlling process on an input signal, wherein

said spread spectrum processing part performs a spread spectrum process on a signal that has undergone said signal gain controlling process.

5. (currently amended) A power line carrier communication system comprising:

a power line functioning as a data transmission path for transmitting data; and

a data communication apparatus that terminates said power line, said data communication apparatus comprising:

a transmission side; and

a reception side that includes

a spread spectrum processing part that performs a spread spectrum process on an input signal;

an analog-to-digital conversion part ~~that performs an analog-to-digital conversion process on a signal that has undergone said spread spectrum process~~that digitally converts the spread spectrum processed signal by sampling the spread spectrum processed signal at a sampling timing in sync with an oscillation timing of the spread spectrum processed signal; and

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an inverse spread spectrum processing part that performs an inverse spread spectrum process of said spread spectrum process on a ~~signal that has undergone said analog-to-digital conversion process~~ the digitally converted signal.

6. (currently amended) A data reception method comprising:

a spread spectrum processing step of performing a spread spectrum process on an input signal;

an analog-to-digital conversion step of ~~performing an analog-to-digital conversion process on a signal that has undergone said spread spectrum process~~ digitally converting the spread spectrum processed signal by sampling the spread spectrum processed signal at a sampling timing in sync with an oscillation timing of the spread spectrum processed signal; and

an inverse spread spectrum processing step of performing an inverse spread spectrum process of said spread spectrum process on a ~~signal that has undergone said analog-to-digital conversion process~~ the digitally converted signal.

7. (previously presented) The data reception method as claimed in claim 8, wherein said spread spectrum process is performed using a predetermined PN sequence in said spread spectrum processing step.

8. (currently amended) The data reception method as claimed in claim 7, wherein a PN sequence number of said PN sequence is set to a value that is adequate for substantial

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improvement in the precision of said analog-to-digital conversion process so that ~~transmission~~ data contained in the input signal can be detected with predetermined precision.

9. (previously presented) The data reception method as claimed in claim 6, further comprising:

a gain controlling step of performing a signal gain controlling process on an input signal;

wherein

said spread spectrum process of said spread spectrum processing step is performed on a signal that has undergone said signal gain controlling process.

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